



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

of the ill health of George Eliot, George Henry Lewes, Wagner, Parkman, Mrs. Carlyle, Spencer, Whittier, Margaret Fuller Ossoli and Nietzsche. It marks a distinct advance upon the book of last year which was devoted to De Quincey, Carlyle, Darwin, Huxley and Browning. The author of this note is not competent to form an opinion of the value of the writer's main contention that most of the ailments of these men were due to eye strain. It seems to him on the contrary that this may be an exaggeration of the kind to which all specialists are probably liable. The neglect of the first volume by some medical journals and the slight or even critical reference to it by others, of which the author has just cause of complaint, is perhaps due to this feeling among his professional brethren. However this may be, Dr. Gould seems to us to have made a very important contribution to the methods of modern biographers. In the future they should certainly take into careful account the health in general if not in detail of the men of whom they write. It is both surprising and pitiful to read the autobiographic record of symptoms and perhaps protracted sufferings by many of these great men and women. Had he waited until its appearance, and then taken account of Herbert Spencer's autobiography, he could have made the chapter devoted to this man very much more pathetic. The question is inevitable whether all of the great workers of the world have been incessantly fighting pain and disease, and the philosophic mind cannot rest short of the further query whether excessive mentation be not itself so unnatural as to be a cause of many of these woes. In our day when hygiene, public, domestic, educational and personal, is coming to play such an important and even central rôle it was high time to look at the lives of the leaders of the race from this view point, and not only the medical profession, but all interested in culture owe to Dr. Gould a debt of gratitude for his painstaking work.

*Die Erregung, Hemmung und Narkose*, von N. E. WEDENSKY. Professor der Physiologie an der Universität der St. Petersburg. Martin Hager, Bonn, 1904. pp. 152.

The present volume, of which a brief notice has already been given in a previous number, states in a concise form the results of a series of experimental researches on the effect of narcotics and various chemical, thermal and electrical stimuli upon a given nerve tract. The chief result of Prof. Wedensky's first research was to confirm the conclusions of Grünhagen and his followers that, in proportion as the poison exerts its influence upon the nerve, the *irritability* of the nerve decreases since increasingly stronger stimuli are necessary to produce the minimal muscular contraction. The *conductivity* on the other hand appears to persist for a longer time, since even minimal electrical stimulations applied to a normal point in the nerve above the narcotized tract are still transmitted through it. An ingenious device by which a telephone was introduced between the narcotized tract and the muscle made possible a series of experiments in which changes in the nerve were indicated by a change of tone in the instrument. With the aid of this apparatus a stage, to which the name Versuchstadium was applied, was discovered in which both weak and strong stimuli were still conducted from the normal point through the narcotized tract although the clear, musical, tone of the telephone had already become dull and confused. From this series of experiments Prof. Wedensky draws two important inferences: (1) that while by the usual method of minimal stimuli the conductivity of the nerve has been regarded as unchanged until its sudden disappearance, it is, in reality, deeply changed before this happens. (2) The narcotized nerve tract, at least in the Versuchstadium must be regarded as in a state of irritability.

In the stage succeeding this, as the narcosis deepens, which he terms the paradoxical stage, it was found that while *strong* stimuli produced only a mere beginning of muscular contraction, *weak* stimuli produced tetanic contraction and that conductivity persists longest for weak stimuli. It was also found that in the paradoxical stage a stimulus applied to the normal nerve tract above the narcotized tract exerted an inhibiting influence upon the latter, *e. g.*, if stimulation of the narcotized tract still produces some response in the muscle, this vanishes or is greatly decreased if a point in the normal nerve tract above is stimulated at the same time. A long series of experiments with induction currents of varying strength was carried out for the purpose of investigating this inhibitory influence of connected nerve tracts and likewise on the effects of different chemical and thermal agents applied to the nerve, from which he concludes that states of the nerve completely analogous to narcosis can be produced by ordinary means of excitation—and that irritability, inhibition, and narcosis are so closely related that the same stimuli under different conditions may produce either of these states. As a term to cover all states of the nerve in which irritability is more or less deadened, whether by narcotics or other means, he coins the word Parabiose, which state he concludes is most closely related if not identical with inhibition. This work of Prof. Wedensky's is the most complete and extensive contribution which has yet been made on the subject of inhibition, and his conclusions are far reaching and important for psychology, inasmuch as the problem of inhibition is closely bound up with those theories of will and attention that have a physiological basis.

Clark University,

THEODATE L. SMITH.

*La Contagion Mentale*, par A. VIGOUROUX et P. P. JUQUELIER. Bibliothèque Internationale de Psychologie Experimentale. Octave Doin, Paris, 1905. pp. 258.

This is a summary discussion of such topics as imitation, suggestion, and other mechanism, the contagion of movements, acts, and affective states, especially the primitive emotions of pain and pleasure and of the highest feelings. Then the contagion of ideas, and the conditions, voluntary and involuntary, under which all these processes occur, conclude the first part. In the second part the contagion of morbid movements, the perversion of nutritive instincts in the form of drugs, morbid fears and phobias, anger, tender emotion, anomalies of personal sentiment, megalomania, suicide, sexual perversions, religious expressions, æsthetic and intellectual sentiments, are discussed. Many personal observations from the author's own experience are introduced into this work.

*L'Arrération Mentale*. Contribution à l'étude de la pathologie infantile. Par DR. AUG. LÉY. J. Lebègue & Cie., Bruxelles, 1904. pp. 263.

The author had unusual opportunities for years for studying backward children and youth at Antwerp and has sought to group the ensemble of symptoms in children slightly retarded in their development. After very briefly discussing causes, especially the biological and social factors, he turns to symptomatology, which occupies most of the book. These are subdivided as somatic and psycho-nervous. Under the former head he treats of all asymmetries which anthropometry can detect. Here, too, he places blood defects and anomalies of temperature. The other group of somatic symptoms which he calls pathological injuries are adenoids, tuberculosis, rickets, syphilis, etc. Under the second general division he takes up especial senses and then passes to the central motor organs under which he discusses not